

February 7, 2018

To: Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education

From: Mandy Finlay, Director of Public Policy
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **S.B. 2226— Relating to Preschool Educator Training Requirements**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229, February 7, 2018, 2:51 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing in SUPPORT of S.B. 2226, which would require specialized training in early childhood education for all teachers and educational assistants within the Executive Office on Early Learning Public Pre-Kindergarten Program.

There is no debate that early learning opportunities have long lasting positive influence on children. We know, for example, that over 85 percent of a child's brain is developed by the age of five. Despite positive advances over the past four years, Hawaii still remains far behind other states in providing early childhood education. **To provide quality early education, however, we must invest in our early learning educators.** Research shows that teachers are most effective in the classroom, and ultimately in improving child outcomes, when they have bachelor's degrees or higher, with specialized training or licensure in early childhood education.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee pass this bill.

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

PERSON TESTIFYING: Robyn S. B. Chun

DATE: Wednesday, February 7, 2018

TIME: 2:51 PM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 229

TITLE OF BILL: SB 2226 RELATING TO PRESCHOOL EDUCATOR TRAINING

Honorable Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele and Committee Members

I strongly support SB 2226 Relating to Preschool Educator Training. I appreciate the forward thinking of our state lawmakers in the area of early learning and previous work to establish policies that lay the foundation for our youngest keiki to succeed educationally and in life.

SB 2226 makes needed amendment to H.B. No. 2507, of the Hawaii Revised Statutes clarifying the appropriate coursework needed to provide teachers and educational assistants in the state's Public PreKindergarten Program with competencies essential to teaching in PreK classrooms. The amendments are consistent the research base and with nationwide benchmarks the National Institute of Early Education Research has developed to guide programs and states in establishing policy and allocating resources that ensure that investments in state PreK settings are implemented in a manner that leads to positive outcomes (Barnett, Friedman-Krauss, Weisenfeld, Horowitz, Kasmin, & Squires, 2016).

When the state launched the public PreK program in 2014, teacher and educational assistant qualifications were not included in the original statute. PreK was new to the Department of Education. Time was needed to develop awareness about how critical this expertise is to a successful PreK program. Former Superintendent Matayoshi's (February 4, 2015) testimony for the HB820 HD 2 and SB 844 SD 2 acknowledged that the "current DOE infrastructure with regards to early childhood recruitment, certification, capacity-building and resources to lead and support early learning is limited and underdeveloped." She reinforced the importance of the Executive Office of Early Learning's in leading efforts to build capacity in the workforce and the early learning programs for our state.

Currently, the University of Hawai'i system early childhood education programs, Samuel & Mary Castle Foundation, State Public Charter School Commission Preschool Development Grant program and other partners are collaborating with the Executive Office of Early Learning to address the need for greater access to coursework. We are also working to increase funding to assist teachers and para-professionals seeking certificates and degrees in the age group and field.

This bill establishes a start date of 2020 when specialized training will be required, allowing time for current teachers and educational assistants to obtain appropriate credentials in the age group and field. It also allows time to build workforce capacity and to recruit and provide coursework that will enable the state to increase the number of teachers and EAs with the appropriate preparation to teach in this high needs area.

Our state funded programs require qualified professionals and para-professionals with the same level of expertise in the field and age group as would be required for teachers and educational assistants in other state funded education positions. Proper preparation ensures adults in state funded PreK classrooms are prepared to implement the research-based practices that lead to positive life and educational outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Hawaii

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2016 DOLLARS)



The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) launched Hawaii's first publicly funded pre-K program in 2014-2015 with an initial \$3 million investment. Hawaii's Department of Education (DOE) is the only statewide public education system in the country comprising only one school district. In July of 2015, the EOEL became attached to the DOE for administrative purposes only; at this time, the EOEL is not considered a part of the DOE. Currently, all pre-K classrooms are located within public schools, as is mandated by a provision in the Hawaii state constitution that bars the distribution of public funds to privately run programs.

In the 2015-2016 school year, the EOEL's Public Prekindergarten Program served 375 students. Classrooms serve 4-year-olds during the year before they are eligible to attend kindergarten, with priority given to those students who are considered to be "at-risk," including those from low-income families (defined as 250% FPL).

Teachers in the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program are part of the Hawaii State Teachers Association and, as such, are granted salary and benefit parity with teachers in the K-12 grades. Reflecting a commitment to quality standards, lead teachers in the Public Prekindergarten Program are required to have a BA with licensure, while assistant teachers are required to have an associate's degree. The union contract requires all lead teachers to participate in 21 hours of in-service training each year.

Classrooms in the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program participate in CLASS observations twice a year, and formative child assessments are conducted three times a year using Teaching Strategies GOLD. In addition, all programs undergo fiscal monitoring annually and a review of program records more than once per year.

In 2014, Hawaii was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG). The PDG is administered by the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission who began implementation in Year One with four charter school classrooms in the 2015-2016 school year, serving 78 children. The schools chosen for Year One implementation were intentionally selected, due to limited access to high-quality preschool programs, so that three of the four schools apply a varying degree of Hawaiian culture instruction. One has Hawaiian cultural elements infused into instruction, another is a Hawaiian immersion school with the majority of students enrolling with English as their first language and then learning the Hawaiian language. The third school is a Hawaiian-medium school with culture and language embedded throughout instruction and family engagement activities.

In Year Two of the PDG grant, two additional classes will be added for a total of six PDG-implemented classrooms. In Years Three and Four, a total of 18 classrooms will be implemented statewide in public charter schools on four islands, of which nine will have varying degrees of Hawaiian cultural and language learning focus.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
42	None Served

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
7	16

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET	
CURRENT STANDARDS	NEW STANDARDS
8	7

HAWAII'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING PUBLIC PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	375
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	250% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	30.5 hours/week; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,537
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,440
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION



* Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	HI PRE-K REQUIREMENT	CURRENT BENCHMARK	MEETS CURRENT BENCHMARK?	NEW BENCHMARK	MEETS NEW BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	New in 2015-2016	—	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Elementary education	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	AA ¹⁰	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	21 hours/year (teachers only); PD plans (teachers only); coaching	For teachers: At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Full physical exam (includes vision & hearing); Support services	Vision, hearing, health & at least one support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Lunch	At least one meal/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discontinued	—
Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (more than once/year); Improvement plan	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			8		7

RESOURCES

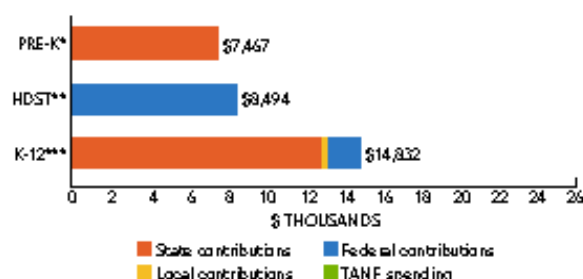
Total state pre-K spending	\$2,800,000
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$7,457
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$7,457

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

** Head Start per-child spending includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds.

*** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED





STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/04/2015
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 309
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 0820 RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education recognizes the importance of early childhood education, as well as its impact upon our children's future outcomes and the state's economic growth. However, we are unable to fully support this measure and offer the following comments.

Our mission is to ensure Hawaii's public school students receive a quality education. As such, the Department is tasked with providing education for students in grades K-12 and its expertise and priorities lies therein. Furthermore, our current infrastructure with regards to early childhood recruitment, certification, capacity-building and resources to lead and support early learning is limited and underdeveloped.

The Department recognizes the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) as possessing the early childhood expertise, including but not limited to comprehensive early childhood development and learning. Therefore, any early childhood programs should be under the management and operational oversight of the EOEL.

We respectfully request that the language in this measure (p.19, line 1, Section 2 (1)) be revised to read, as follows: "Be provided through department of education public schools and public charter schools the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) who may partner with the department of education,...."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.